Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Two weeks ago I confronted Henry B. Blackwell with a dilemma. He has chosen the fool horn. After refusing to admit to the columns of the "Woman's Journal" an advertisement of Karl Heinzen's "Rights of Women" (a book whose author he describes as "a man of excellent purpose and unselfish enthusiasm"), he now stultifies himself by printing a half-column review of the book, which advertises it ten times as effectively as the advertisement which he rejected. Mr. Blackwell is too weak to be successfully intolerant. He should take a lesson from the Czar.

Ex-Senator Ingalls is undoubtedly one of the brightest men in the camp of the enemy; yet the blunders he commits in discussing social movements are most amusing and of a kind that even ordinary workmen would know how to avoid. Listen to his denunciation of paternalism: "For the first time in the history of this country the declaration is openly made that we are to substitute for individualism paternalism, that we are to substitute for the activity of the individual the rule of the State; and it is no longer a smothered curse or a muttered anathema, but the avowal of an aggressive campaign of speculation in the name of justice. For the first time we hear it declared that there shall be an abolition of debts, public and private; that there shall be no more taxes; that there shall be in this country a forcible redistribution of property." What paternalist ever favored the abolition of taxation?

Scoffers may continue to scoff and doubters to doubt, but it is nevertheless a glorious fact that civilization penetrates everywhere and conquers everything. Even war is becoming merciful, as is attested by the new style of bullets claimed by German surgeons to be the most humane missiles yet employed in war. The new bullets have been appropriately christened "humanity bullets." A newspaper furnishes the following interesting information: "The new projectile, which is made to be fired from a rifle of small calibre, is long, so that its 'weight of section,' as it is termed by soldiers, is large, while its actual weight may be smaller than that of bullets of the old shape. By combining great weight of section with small diameter, great velocity is given to the projectile, as well as such penetrating force that it will easily go through two or three men at the distance of a mile. The Germans say that the new projectile will not remain in the wound, but will make a straight perforation through the body, greatly simplifying the surgical treatment. As lead bullets of the modern shape would be likely to bend, they are cased with steel or nickel tubes, which gives them the property of penetrating the hardest bone without deviating from their course."

If any one wishes to know the effects of Archism upon a country and its inhabitants, let him read the work I have just published, "Russian Traits and Terrors." Its pages are crammed with convincing proofs of the tendency of paternalism to develop dishonesty, laziness, and blind abandonment to fate, and to suppress by torture every noble ambition. The absurdities and abominations of the press censorship, the rank injustice and persecution visited upon the Jews, the rotten financial condition of the Czar's government causing a constant tightening of the screws upon the peasantry to postpone the day of bankruptcy, and the atrocities practised in the prisons, are pictured with scrupulous fidelity to truth and proved by overwhelming testimony. The chapter on the prisons is followed by the ode which it called forth from Swinburne inciting to tyrannicide. The book is a collection in one volume of a long series of articles that have appeared in the "Fortnightly Review," and which were the work of several writers who conceal themselves under a collective signature, E. B. Lanin. It has nearly three hundred pages, and sells in cloth at one dollar and in paper at thirty-five cents. I will send it, post-paid, on receipt of the price.

The Wyoming Legislature having passed a bill taxing bachelors two dollars a year, Kate Field attempts to justify its action. Here is her fallacious argument: "Society says to a woman: 'It's your business to be married as soon after you have made your *début* as possible. Otherwise you'll be called an old maid, than which there can be no epithet more odious. But you can't choose a husband. That would be most unwomanly. You must wait to be asked.' Well, if these lords don't choose to take upon themselves the responsibilities of matrimony, why should not they pay a penalty? Just so long as women are taunted for living in single blessedness, just so long ought unmarried men to be taxed." Kate Field is brilliant, but unsound. She fails to grasp the principle of equal liberty, and makes no distinctions between invasive laws backed by brute force, and tyrannical customs supported by nothing but superstition and conventional notions of propriety. A woman is not forbidden by law to propose marriage to the man of her choice, and would not make herself liable to punishment by proposing. It is true that she would be a target for the coarse comments of fools and cowards; but the person whose legitimate acts are thus censured ought to be independent enough to defy the contemptible censors. women are not brave and rational enough to overcome the shadowy obstacles of mere custom and convention, the fault is their own, and the remedy is in their own hands. They simply need to learn to be independent. The men who refuse to marry don't object to the kind of punishment which women receive for asking to be taken in marriage. Confirmed bachelors are perfectly willing to face the ridicule and scorn and censure of the fools and meddlers. But when the law taxes them, and punishes them for declining to marry by fine or imprisonment, it violates equal liberty and becomes invasive, and the bachelors may protest against such a proceeding.

Mr. Fisher's article, on another page, is nothing but a string of assertions, most of which, as matters of fact, are untrue. The chief of these untruths is the statement that in exchanging gold we do not consume it. What is consumption? It is the act of destroying by use or waste. One of the uses of gold—and under the existing financial system its chief use—is to act as a medium of exchange, or else as the basis of such a medium. In performing this function it wears out; in other words, it is consumed. Being given a monopoly of this use or function, it has an artificial value,—a value which it would not have if other articles, normally capable of this function, were not forbidden to compete with it. And these articles suffer from this restriction of competition in very much the same way that a theatre forbidden to give Sunday performances suffers if its rival is allowed the privilege. Mr. Fisher may deny the analogy as stoutly as he chooses; it is none the less established. This analogy established, Mr. Fisher's position falls,—falls as surely as his other position has fallen,—the position that government cannot affect values, which he at first laid down with as much contemptuous assurance as if no one could deny it without thereby proving himself a born fool. So there is no need to refute the rest of the assertions. I will simply enter a specific denial of some of them. It is untrue that gold is not withdrawn from the market to raise its price. It is untrue that the gold mines are kept open *principally* to supply the arts. It is untrue that, if gold were twice as dear or twice as cheap, bankers would not lose or gain; the chief business of the banker is not to buy and sell gold, but to lend it. And I believe it to be untrue—though here I do not speak of what I positively know—that English law permits the establishment of such banks as Proudhon, Greene, and Spooner proposed. Mr. Fisher certainly should know more about this than I; but I doubt his statement, first, because I have found him in error so often; second, because nine out of ten Massachusetts lawyers will tell you with supreme confidence that there is no law in Massachusetts prohibiting the use of notes and checks as currency, (yet there is one of many years' standing, framed in plain terms, and often have I astonished lawyers of learning and ability by showing it to them); and third, because I am sure that, if such banks were legal in England, they would have been started long ago.

Business Must Be Done.

[Galveston News.]

The democratic editors of Kansas in their address to the farmers say: "To those who favor governmental loaning of money on the products of the soil, we quote a maxim by one of the founders of the government. The government must not become a banker." This is really democratic, but it does not meet the difficulty of which the farmers and many others complain. It is true as far as it goes, but it does not touch the cause of the trouble or the possible remedy. It is quite as true that government must not become a farmer, a miller, or a common carrier as that government must not become a banker; but the man does not live who would not at last rather eat a loaf of bread baked in a government bakery, with flour made in a government mill, from wheat grown on a government farm and hauled over a government railway, than suffer extreme hunger every day of his life and see his children perish. It is necessary that there be farmers, millers, carriers, bakers, and bankers. When the democratic theory of which Kansas editors have stated part is stated in full, understood, and acted upon, it will not be necessary for the government to be a banker. But if only half the truth is told and acted on, and if there are not bankers enough permitted to do business, the time will come when the government will be the farmer, the baker, and all trades. The truth that there must be banking done is a greater practical truth than the truth that the government must not be the banker if democrats can help it; so there will be a deal of banking done, and it may depend upon democratic editors to decide by what means it shall be done. Does anyone expect to construct this kind of syllogism: Government must not become a banker; nobody else must become a banker; therefore banking must be given up? He will run against a strong tendency which affirms that business must be done, and which will have small patience with politicians who occupy a negative attitude toward the supply of any business want.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

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The Weekly Bulletin of Newspaper and Periodical Literature is the title of a new paper recently established by the editor of Liberty. It brings into journalism a very simple and yet a thoroughly novel idea, — that of serving as a guide or index to all other journals. Its ambition is to make itself a classified Table of Principal Contents for the English periodical Press of the United States and the British Provinces of North America, including especially the dailies and the weeklies. Through its agency the scientist, the inventor, the artist, the *littérateur*, the professional man, the mechanic, the merchant, and the man of the world can place themselves constantly in touch with those sources which may supply each respectively the materials for the lack of which he is suffering or thwarted in his aims. The Bulletin will ignore all petty news, all local happenings of limited interest, and even, on the other hand, all general news of such wide interest that it is sure to appear in nearly all the daily papers simultaneously. But all specialties will be noted in the Bulletin by title, by the name of the author when known, by the name and date of the periodical in which they appear, by a rough estimate of length, and occasionally by a line or two of description.

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The Referendum and Liberty.

Much has been written lately about the Referendum and its advantages. The eagerness and interest manifested in the investigation of the Referendum as practised in Switzerland would appear to indicate that the thoughtful elements in this country are beginning to realize the grave vices of our political arrangements regarded from a purely Democratic point of view. It is gradually being discovered here that, as Mr. J. W. Sullivan (whose article on the Swiss Referendum in the "Chautauquan" may be recommended as the most intelligent and instructive of those that have appeared within the past six months in our magazines) points out, "there is a difference between a Democratic government and a representative government. A Democracy is government by the majority. A representative government is rule by a succession of oligarchies." Such a discovery is bound to initiate a movement in favor of a reform which should bring about a closer correspondence and congruity between the theory of Democracy and the institutions alleged to embody it. Granting the superior merit of the Swiss form of Democracy which is sought to be transplanted by our semi-radicals, it is important to define the proper attitude of consistent libertarians towards that higher form. In France, in Proudhon's days, the subject of "direct government" received ample consideration and elucidation; but unfortunately few American writers or readers care or know how to profit by the labors of the French Anarchist and his Socialist and economist opponents.

Briefly, then, as to facts, the Referendum is the reference of proposed laws to the voters for their veto or approval. Among the corollaries of the referendum are the right of the initiative, — the proposal of a law by some of the citizens to all of the citizens, — the right of the peremptory recall of representatives, and the right of revising the constitution. The optional form of the Referendum is still practised in some cantons, but the manifest and serious defects of this form have developed a tendency toward the obligatory form. On this point Mr. Sullivan writes as follows:

> Zurich furnishes the example of the cantons having the obligatory Referendum. There the law provides: 1. That all laws, decrees, and changes in the constitution must be submitted to the people. 2. That all decisions of the Grand Council on existing law must be voted on. 3. That the Grand Council may submit decisions which it itself proposes to make.
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> In effect, the obligatory Referendum makes of the entire citizenship a deliberative body in perpetual session. Formerly, its adversaries made much of the argument that it was ever calling the voters to the urns. This is now avoided by the semi-annual elections. It was once feared that the voters would vote party tickets without regard to the merits of the various measures. But it has been proved beyond doubt that the fate of one proposition has no effect on that of another decided at the same time.
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> To the prophets who foresaw endless partisan strife in case the Referendum was to be called in force on every measure, Zurich has replied by reducing partisanship to the lowest point, its people indifferent to parties since an honest vote of the whole body of citizens is to be the unquestionable issue of every question.

Referring to the current political beliefs and ideas in Switzerland, Mr. Sullivan says:

> The sentiment is strong in Switzerland that there is but one way to reform the government and keep it reformed. It is for the people themselves to take the direction of their public affairs at every step. The exercise of popular rights extended and simplified — this the remedy. With the government mechanism void unless approved by the citizenship, rogues might get into office, but in vain; at their direction nothing would be done. Deprived of the law-making power, representatives are no longer rulers, and it is then they may be expected to seek the common benefit. The friends of the perfected Referendum, — the obligatory form, — embracing a large body of the Swiss people, are demanding that its sphere shall be enlarged. They hope to see the referendary right exercised completely in all public matters — in commune, city, canton, and nation. There is an element with even greater hopes. It sees in the pathway of the Referendum the road leading to the regeneration of society. It believes the unobstructed will of the people will push on to the settlement of every radical question. Already this will is engaging itself with the problem of monopoly — in banking, in trade, in the land. These issues settled and the law of justice becoming the law of custom, the time will come, these reformers hold, when repressive statutes shall no longer be necessary.

Continuing, Mr. Sullivan expresses himself as sharing these optimistic anticipations and believing in the possibility of the Referendum serving as the means of regenerating society. "Observe," he says, "what the Referendum, imperfect as it is, has done in Switzerland. In all parts it has scotched the politician; in some, it has buried him. It has without fail reduced taxation wherever applied. . . . It has caused the laws to be expressed in plain language, to the impoverishment of legal word-splitters. It has brought about a remarkable purification of the press, slander campaigns being unknown, since principles are everything to the voters, office holders comparatively nothing. It has made the public services — the post-office, the railroads — the equal of private enterprise in efficiency. Above all, it has rendered vicious or reactionary legislation impossible, nearly every law being the direct expression of an honest people."

It is to be regretted that Mr. Sullivan has not deemed it worth while to establish the connection between direct government and honesty, competence, and efficiency in administration. I confess I do not see how either of the corollaries of the Referendum (or all of them together) can make the public service the equal of private enterprise in efficiency. If this is true, the result cannot be attributed to the Referendum, but must be due to some other cause. Business methods and governmental monopoly do not generally go together; and the right of recalling officials or discharging employees is totally inadequate, in the absence of competition, to produce service equal to private enterprise. It seems rather disappointing to find that under the purest form of Democracy freedom in the mail service is as inaccessible as it is under the worst form of the spoils system. Perhaps the postal service in Switzerland is superior to ours; but the fact that it is monopolized at all would seem to be a strong practical refutation of the claims of the Referendum as a system affording a large measure of individual freedom.

In view of this denial of a liberty so simple, the statement that the Referendum has rendered vicious or reactionary legislation impossible cannot, obviously, be taken in any but a Pickwickian sense. Is not legislation interdicting private mails vicious and reactionary? A country relieved of all vicious and reactionary legislation would indeed be on the high road to perfection, since the only legislation that is not vicious and reactionary is that which equal liberty admits and demands. The plain and obvious implication of Mr. Sullivan's words is that equal liberty reigns supreme in Switzerland. Now, is this true, even in the individualist sense and interpretation? Are there no financial, industrial, and other monopolies in that confederation? Of course, Mr. Sullivan realizes that Switzerland is far from being the home of equal liberty, and that its burden of vicious legislation is far from light. It is true doubtless that direct government renders extraordinarily vicious legislation impossible, and therein lies its admitted superiority; but there is absolutely nothing in its theory or practice to operate as a bar to the legalization of folly and iniquity of the ordinary kind. Unless the ruling majority desire and understand liberty, there is nothing in the Referendum to reassure the individual who distrusts government. Assuming actual majority rule, it is manifest that the measure of liberty enjoyed by the individual will depend upon the degree of rationality and intelligence possessed by the majority. A deluded and befogged majority will establish tariffs, banking monopolies, and the thousand and one evils with which we are familiar in the so-called free countries. On the other hand it is equally clear that the absence of the Referendum would not enable the tariff or any other piece of vicious legislation to survive contrary to the opinions and wishes of a majority of the people in this country.

No, the Referendum will not give us political freedom. Majority rule and personal liberty are not synonyms, nor is majority rule a pledge or guarantee of liberty. The palladium of liberty is genuine trial by jury, which does away with majority rule. Let legislation be referred for approval or rejection to juries representing the whole country instead of to the

majority, and then there will be some hope for justice and liberty. By all means let us demand the Referendum *in this sen*

V. Y.

Currency and Government.

To the Editor of Liberty:

There is not the slightest analogy between allowing theatres to be consumed on Sundays and allowing silver or iron to be sold on the same terms as gold. Currency is only buying and selling, it is not consuming. The customary adoption of gold as currency and the endorsement of this custom by edict involves only a very insignificant increase in its consumption. Most other commodities waste much more than gold in the processes of stocking, marketing, and distributing from points of production to points of consumption. An admission that if government allowed an increase in the consumption of theatres it would raise the price, in no way affects any known proposal or enactment in regard to gold as currency, because currency laws have so little effect upon the consumption of gold. There are laws which possibly affect the value of the precious metals. There are such as prohibit mixing them freely in all proportions, producing utensils or other articles of consumption. Thus if the removal of the present restrictions should lead to a larger consumption of silver in culinary articles, this would slightly raise the price of silver.

But what is the use of pursuing a false analogy? If government simply facilitated the sale of theatres, how would that affect their price in the market? A comparison of the effects of facilitating consumption does not illustrate the effects of facilitating exchanges. It is in the power of government to alter the values of the precious metals enormously within the areas of their dominion by prohibiting their importation or exportation or by duties or bounties. It will be time enough to discuss these matters when they are proposed. They are not analogous to the attempts to fix the value of silver by the schemes of the bi-metallists, and they have still less analogy to the statutes which are supposed to determine the value of gold, but which, as a matter of fact, do nothing of the sort. To state that one-fourth ounce of gold shall exchange for one-fourth ounce of gold is simply to cumber the statute book with a "chestnut." No government ever does stipulate "that all money shall be made of or issued against gold or silver," and it is in supposing that it does so that some of our comrades get wrong. What is called *money* in the above sentence means a bond or promise to deliver coin. There is nothing to prevent anyone from issuing bonds or promises to deliver something else, such as petroleum, pig-iron, wheat, lard, and so on. If you promise delivery of petroleum on demand or at a date named, you only discharge your bond by legally tendering the petroleum as specified. The law of England allows this. To prevent it would disorganize all trade. What is prohibited is the production and issue of notes in one particular form, — namely, promises to pay gold to bearer on demand. It is a most vicious equivoque to call such instruments money and to exclude checks, drafts, bills, notes, whether drawn for gold, silver, iron, lard, or even labor.

Space prohibits (even when a condensed statement, which will be misnamed dogmatism, is employed) showing that even under our truck laws no one is prohibited from using or taking as a payment, flour, bread, meat, calico, boots, and so on.

The analogy as to an enactment that all plates should be made of tin is equally misleading and unsound. Government does not enact that all marketable articles shall be made of gold, or that all articles capable of being sold for future delivery shall be made of gold. There is no benefit to this argument in confounding acts which would seriously affect consumption with acts which have little or no such effect. The gold embodied in coins is marketable stock, it is not in consumption as the tin would be if it had a monopoly in plate production. We want plates to use, we carry coin always to sell. It is not withdrawn from the market so as to raise its price, but is constantly brought afresh to market so as equally to lower it. Besides this, the illustration assumes and implies that for gold there is no other use of great significance but coin-making. If this were so, then the Westrups, the Tarns, and the Tuckers would have the argument all on their own side. The fact is, however, that the gold mines are not kept open to supply coin, but to supply the arts.

There is yet another fallacy in our comrades' position. It would be no monetary disadvantage if the facts really were as they suppose. If gold were twice as dear, or twice as cheap, its merchants would make just the same profit, bankers and financiers would not lose or gain — neither would anybody except the producers and consumers of gold. Grocers' profits are not affected by the price of sugar, but the growers and users are both vitally concerned.

There would seem to be nothing whatever in English law to prevent the establishment of a bank without any specie issuing inconvertible paper, which the customers mutually agree to accept at par value, but there is little likelihood such a scheme would be workable. It would tax the powers of a very clever master of legal or Anarchical phraseology to specify upon the notes the responsibility of each customer and to preserve the power of these customers fulfilling their agreements. Before one could use such notes to buy a breakfast or a railway ticket there would have to be a rather involved and tedious disquisition upon economics. No Anarchist would propose to embody such arrangements in a statute like our limited liability laws. Such notes would therefore be simply of the nature of mortgage bonds for which there would possibly be a market and a price. The price would probably be below rather than above par.

Free trade in gold and in credit is desirable. Its desirability is proportionate to the restrictions which exist, but these are not very great or grievous. The field for their discussion opens only when our comrades' present mist have rolled away. But they bear no comparison with acts for the purchase by government of great quantities of silver, acts for repairing worn gold coin at public expense, and, above all, acts for tariffs designed to hamper trade and acts for raising public revenue in general.

Let our comrades in "Liberty," "Egoism," and "The Herald of Anarchy" rise to more vital matters when they touch upon the economics of coercion. The evils of coinage are greatly overstated and to them are attributed effects with which they have no connection.

J. Greevz Fisher.

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The Limits of Governmental Interference.*

Before I can express any opinion upon the limits of Governmental interference, I must explain to you my views upon what constitutes a government.

In doing so I shall place before you, to the best of my ability, what is commonly called the Anarchistic view.

It has been objected that each one who calls himself an Anarchist holds a different opinion from the next one who calls himself by the same name; and that consequently the name of Anarchism conveys no definite meaning. The assertion that there are wide differences of opinion among Anarchists is true: the inference that there is no coherent group of opinions corresponding to the name is, I think, mistaken.

At this time there are a dozen different sets of people who are thinking about the pressing questions of the day, — the Socialists, the George men, the Ethical Culturists, the Christian Socialists, the Anarchists, — and of each of these there are sub-divisions. Take any branch you may, and you will scarcely find two members of it of entirely the same opinion. It is as true of any one of them as it is true of the Anarchists.

Indeed, in such a time of fervent thought, when the most marked intellectual feature of the day is the almost universal anticipation impending change, what could we expect among those who think at all but striking divergences of opinion? How could we expect that among Anarchists most of all there would not be strongly declared individual differences, being as they are undoubtedly the most advanced, whether they are the most correct in their conclusions or not?

Would not anything approaching unanimity mean fixity and death?

But it may be roughly said that, whatever their internal differences, all Anarchists think that progress and the attainment of economic comfort is possible without any relinquishment of liberty, while most other schools are of the opinion that meat is more than life and that material prosperity must be purchased at the cost of some liberty.

No time need be spent now upon theological questions. Theology has retired from the battle. It would be as becoming for a man to kick his grandmother as to revile theology nowadays. By sheer inertia the Churches still exist, as the train runs on, with speed scarcely perceptibly slackened, after the locomotive is detached; but their warmth has cooled, the infernal fires that drove them on are drawn, and all men can see that they are now but dead ashes.

What is the meaning of this retirement of theology? Few suspect the importance of its bearing upon practical affairs. It means more than the mere exchanging church going for Coney Island going on Sundays. It means more even than the final removal from man's life of a mass of hopes and fears that have seemed to many the most important part of life. Beyond all that, it means that a new way of looking at things must arise, to influence each most trivial action, and throw a new and different glory upon life.

Those who regret the falling of the leaves, but have not yet learned to look forward to their coming again, despair as they see the breaking-up of the old beliefs. We are left without a moral standard, they exclaim.

How can men, left "without hope" in the world, find any rule of action by which they can regulate their conduct?

Their complaint is just. We are indeed left without a moral standard. To take its place there has developed the egoistic philosophy, the outcome of the utilitarian doctrine, and bearing much the same relation to it that Anarchism bears to Democracy.

"Do what you think is most to your interest" is the Egoistic principle.

Antagonistic as such a phrase sounds to the codes of the past, impossible as it seems that what we have been accustomed to call "lofty" or "noble" actions can spring from such a source, it will be found upon consideration that, so far from forbidding a high ideal of conduct, a high ideal is possible upon no other basis.

To the Christian the notion that it can be directly profitable to be honest is a very painful notion. His notion is that the directly profitable and pleasant course is the dishonest one; and that nobody would submit to the distasteful requirement of honesty except with a due reward hereafter in view in consideration of his self-denial in abstaining from dishonesty.

So with all other virtues and vices. The vices are esteemed by the ascetic code that is evanescent to be essentially pleasant; the virtues essentially painful. There is nothing for it, according to that code, but for us to bear with the discomforts attaching to a virtuous life, lest a worse thing befall us in a hypothetical future existence.

The scientific view, on the other hand, is that virtue is virtue only because it is productive of happiness; and that vice is vice only because it is productive of unhappiness. At the bottom moreover each one is unable to determine what is for the advantage or happiness of another; while each one knows, better than anybody else, what is for his own happiness. Therefore at the bottom each action must be judged by the individual, as to whether it is conducive to his own happiness, not as to whether it will make somebody else happy.

And this applies in its fullest force even to those actions commonly called altruistic, which give pleasure to the doer indirectly, although directly they may give pain to the doer and pleasure to somebody else.

A kind action performed without any sense of gratification to the doer, loses its character as a kind action. If the one who is benefited even suspects that his benefactor is loath to do him the kind act, his appreciation of it gives place to reluctance, or even to resentment.

Benevolence is hypocrisy, when prompted by any feeling but personal delight in benevolence.

Such, most briefly and inadequately sketched, is Egoism. Does it surprise you that I should connect such widely separated matters as the immediate economic distress, and such wide-drawn ethical formulas? that I should derive social progress from the elimination of the hell-fire theory? Just this connection I wish to accentuate. Just so intimately, in fact, are our every-day actions based upon our underneath philosophy.

"Do what seems to your advantage," says Egoism, "in fact, you cannot do otherwise."

Why then exhort people to do what they cannot help doing? Simply for this reason, — that, although each always does what seems to him most to his advantage, there may be a wide variation in the accuracy of his estimate of what is most to his advantage.

It is to the development of the intellect as a guide to conduct that Science exhorts, not as in the past to an emotional subjection to cut-and-dried moral formulas.

Test your actions, not by formulas, but test both formulas and actions continually as you test other things, by observing whether they fulfil their purpose, whether they accord with other facts, whether they are just and true.

But, when once you are sure that a given course of action will conduce to your happiness, follow it.

If you are sure that you enjoy quarrelling and tumult among those about you, by all means bully and rage and tyrannize until, no matter how much pain others may suffer, you yourself have achieved happiness so far.

If, on the other hand, you enjoy a peaceful life, notice particularly that your bullying and so on directly diminishes your happiness. Perhaps you will find that you stir up a tumult, not because you like a tumult, but because you are urged by some old-fashioned talk of duty.

"It is for a man to be master in his own house." "Little children must do as they are told." "It is proper for servants to remember their station." These are the superstitious formulas to which we sacrifice our happiness. Science intervenes and says: "In giving precedence to a formula you commit an error of judgment. Let the formula go. If you want peace and quiet, do what is directly necessary to procure peace and quiet, and do not sacrifice your happiness to a superstition."

There are no such things as right and wrong; there are very certainly such things as good judgment and bad judgment. A man cannot be wicked, he may be foolish. "Forsake the foolish and live." "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

Applying this principle to affairs political, Anarchists observe two main facts. First: That, for the procurement of happiness, freedom of action for each individual is indispensable.

So various are the tastes of men that each must be happy, if at all, in his own way. To be in a position to obtain happiness men must be independent, and men must be free.

Secondly, they observe that in all past times a large part of men's activities have been unnecessary; having been directed, not toward gratifying their desires, but toward logically carrying out certain inaccurate inferences as to

*A paper read at a recent parlor meeting in New York.

the sequences of phenomena which we commonly call superstitions.

Thus men, in all ages, have heavily taxed themselves, owing to a mistaken estimate of the ability of certain men to predict, and by means of prayers and incantations to control the future. So too, men still tax themselves heavily out of deference to a superstitious reverence for a creature of the imagination called the State — sometimes called our country, — and they do things detrimental to their welfare for what they call the honor of the country, lofty patriotism, and so forth.

Often, too, men sacrifice their happiness in the interest of what they call "morality," as at all periods humane and kindly men have suffered their impulses to be quenched by an insane deference for the established bloodthirsty methods, from the Roman cross to the American gallows, justifying what they know is barbarous, by the name of morality.

Seeing all this, Anarchists say: We will no longer acquiesce in this. As soon as possible entirely, and now to the extent of our abilities, we will do only what gives us happiness.

We demand the fullest liberty possible to exercise our faculties, and we are willing to concede the same liberty to others. We may object if anybody enjoys his Sunday by making such a racket as to disturb us; but we object, distinctly, because we do not like to be disturbed, not because it is Sunday. On any other day the same disturbance we would object to as much.

This view of it urges that for the attainment of happiness all must have entire liberty to do anything; but that where these liberties conflict one extinguishes the other. I have the right to aggress, but, if the society of men gives me more pleasure than an Ishmael's life, I will abstain from aggression. That it is advisable that each should exercise all liberties, save such as limit the exercise of the liberties of others, is called the law of equal liberty, and is simply a formulated statement of the necessary relations of individuals in a perfect society, as derived from mechanical and biological data.

Nor need anybody stagger over the question of what constitutes aggression, although it is a frequent staggering point for the inquirer.

In the nature of things what constitutes aggression is a variable quantity. Each one must estimate whether it is not easier for him to put up with a given action on the part of another, rather than take the trouble to suppress it by force. The other must judge whether it is for his interest to abstain upon request, or to court forcible encounter. Upon the degree in which force and fighting are pleasurable occupations at any given stage of development, will depend the solution.

Although Anarchism maintains the right of each individual to compel any action upon the part of others by any means he may choose, it announces that as a matter of policy it is not advisable for any one to compel any action from others, except in restraint of aggression upon their part. This may still seem too vague, but Anarchism goes a step farther.

In suppressing attacks, it says, we will do what we can ourselves, and we will invite others to aid us; we, however, pledge ourselves not to compel anybody to help us suppress an action of which he does not desire the suppression. This would appear to us aggression on our part — and we will not indulge in it.

Here we touch bottom.

The essence of government is that it permits no secession.

Men may long for the abolition of political abuses of the present, — they are compelled to support them. Men may regard war as murder, they must pay each his quota to support it.

Men may regard churches as deleterious in their influence and immoral in their teachings, — by the exemption of churches from taxation we are all assessed to support them.

And so on. The intelligent, the progressive must retire until they can find a majority to agree with them.

Therefore it is that Anarchists abjure and denounce the system of compulsory taxation, which is the essence of government.

In denying compulsory taxation we deny government in any proper sense of the word.

A protective association, protecting only those who wish to pay for protection, and refraining from territorial dominion, is not a government.

In its nature a government compels adhesion, forces financial support, where it is not yielded willingly, and is essentially, not a protective, but an aggressive association.

With a voluntary defensive association the Anarchist has no quarrel: as for the compulsory association, he looks forward to its speedy death, from natural causes.

So that we can at last answer the question as to the limits of governmental interference, by answering that when men are influenced by their reason rather than by their superstitions they will not permit any interference at all with their actions by the organized system of aggression called government.

Observe, now, how directly the abolition of the governmental monster will conduce to our happiness.

First of all, the land will be free.

Any land which is not used by somebody, anybody else will be free to go to work upon.

In the next place the currency will be free, permitting men to exchange their products to the best advantage.

These two freedoms alone mean much. They mean the end of rent and interest, the two most potent agents in the process which we see going on, the transferring of wealth from the pocket of the worker to that of the idler.

They mean the end of commercial profits and dividends of all kinds, which are but other forms of rent and interest.

They mean the substantial financial equality of all who choose to make equal exertions, the certainty of support for the industrious, abundance of occupation for all who wish it, the impossibility of existence without labor.

Further than this, Anarchism means the cessation of all taxes, save such as free people judge to be for their advantage to pay, — the total cessation of the present practice of bonding towns, not so much for the benefit of the improvements as to afford another investment for those who are seeking more opportunities to profit without labor.

Anarchism means too, no indirect taxation, no secret filching of what the authorities dare not grasp openly, no robber import-duties, no spying Comstock and Sunday laws, no suppression, repression, and perpetual compression of our energies.

Inequalities, truly; but such only as are inborn. Artificial inequalities no longer.

With such freedom to associate freely, with the burdens of compulsory association removed, Anarchists think that human society will evolve toward a more perfect and complete happiness, economical, physical, and intellectual than any Fourier or Bellamy can predict, added to the priceless joys of liberty.

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NEW YORK, JULY 14, 1891.

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